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NATIONAL REVIEW

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November 30, 1957

A WEEKLY JOURNAL OF OPINION

Learning to Read: Child's Play

ISABEL PATERSON

Book Reviews by

PRISCILLA L. BUCKLEY

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RODNEY GILBERT

WILLMOORE KENDALL

HUGH KENNER

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ROBERT PHELPS

GODFREY P. SCHMIDT

STEPHEN J. TONSOR

FALL BOOK NUMBER

For the Record

The sedition trial of John and Sylvania Powell and Julian Schuman is a step closer but still uncertain. (The three are accused of publishing Communist germ warfare charges against the U.S. in their Shanghai magazine during the Korean War.) The State Department has now authorized the defense attorney to travel in Red China and North Korea to question witnesses, but the Reds aren't expected to let him in....The American Civil Liberties Union is up in arms this week over a) Minnesota's intention of including a cross in the state's centennial emblem and b) the decision by the Chicago Lake View High School to have Christmas decorations this year.

Construction has started on a 100-foot bell tower in Washington, a \$700,000 memorial to the late Senator Robert A. Taft; the money has been raised by private subscription....Citizens for Eisenhower are reported to have \$200,000 in their war chest and to be looking for more contributions with which to finance Liberal Republican candidates next year.

Despite the back-slapping that went on during the Moscow visit of Egyptian War Minister Amer, Soviet-Egyptian relations are cooling. Prices have risen 30 per cent in Egypt since Nasser tied Egypt's economy to the Iron Curtain....Nasser, who expelled or squeezed out over 30,000 foreign businessmen in his early "Egypt for the Egyptians" enthusiasm, is reported making overtures to many of them to return.

Senators Humphrey and Case (not unexpectedly) hurried to get themselves on record as supporters of bigger budgets. Both Senators favor higher military expenditures next year, but not at the expense of any civilian social welfare program....Senator Mansfield, back from Mexico, recommends an end to our technical assistance program there which he claims was badly run in 1955, and is in worse shape now....The General Accounting Office charges that the Army failed "adequately to protect the Government's interest" in a \$12 million purchase of hand grenades from Belgium, which proved to be duds and were subsequently junked.

Talk of passive resistance, that's what Indian ladies are offering to the government proposal that they do without lipstick and "save the money for national development."

NATIONAL REVIEW

A WEEKLY JOURNAL OF OPINION

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The WEEK

● *Apropos* the alleged superiority of Soviet education: A boy who studied for seven years in Russian schools told newsmen the other night that the work there wasn't any harder than the work in American schools—at least in grades one through seven. Russian children, like their American counterparts, he said, often sign up for snap courses, the most snap of which, according to him, is the course in the Soviet Constitution.

● Miss Nina Landau, a New York student whose devotion to a free press led her to violate U.S. regulations in order to have a prurient look at Red China last summer, is back, and has told Mike Wallace all about it. Chinese hospitality was simply scrumptious. All the doors were held wide open. Miss Landau was even invited to witness the execution of three "counter-revolutionaries" who had been condemned to death for leading an anti-government student riot. This kind of thing Miss Landau took in stride. She was "more curious than shocked" by the prospect of witnessing an execution, but she turned down the opportunity. Not, she made it clear, from a maidenly squeamishness (how else deal with counter-revolutionaries?) about watching men die; she simply wasn't that "interested" (executions, after all, are rather commonplace nowadays). Instead, said reporter Landau, "I went to a marvelous ballet." There is a lot to be said for going to the theater in China, where soundproofed walls keep out distracting noises of shots, and counter-revolutionary screams.

● As leader of the Communist Party of the U.S. from 1930 to 1946, Earl Browder was Stalin's No. 1 apologist and agent during the years of the liquidation of the peasants, the Moscow Trial frameups and purges, the Pact with Hitler, the rape of Eastern Europe and the betrayal of Moscow's wartime alliances. In 1946 Browder was thrown out, very much against his own will, for "deviations." He has never renounced his past; he has never repudiated his basic ideology; he has refused to tell the vast amount he knows of the Communist underground. Three years ago the Ford Foundation, feeling that this record qualified Browder as the kind of expert on Communism that they needed, hired him as a consultant. Rutgers University, inspired no doubt by the Foundation's precedent, took Browder on this autumn as a lecturer on "comparative economics."

In his first professional talk to Rutgers students, Browder concluded with an inspiring contribution to American education: "Man will indeed triumph over the police state," he prophesied—though he did not specify *what* "police state" he had in mind—because, he carefully explained, of "the training in analytical thought bestowed by Karl Marx."

● Prime Minister Bandaranaike of Ceylon was elected largely on his stirring promise to nationalize the foreign-owned tea plantations, which account for more than 50 per cent of Ceylon's exports. Last week, Bandaranaike admitted nationalization was off. To his surprise, he had found that it was proving difficult simultaneously to a) plan the nationalization of foreign investments and b) induce foreigners to make further investments.

● Senator Ellender of Louisiana, just back from the third of his annual visits to the USSR (he stayed a whole month this time), is saying all the things he would have said if he had been brainwashed. We should be more conciliatory toward the Soviet Union. Peaceful coexistence is "worth a trial" by U.S. foreign policy (by contrast, one supposes, with our strategy of annihilation in recent years). We should exchange more visitors with the USSR. There is no reason, as far as he can see, why the Soviet leaders can't be trusted, or why a lasting peace cannot be negotiated with them. He would, in short—the phrasemaker in him will out now and then—"lean over backwards to meet them half way." Nothing different, of course, from what goes on in the average Liberal's head—except that the Senator brings it all together in one place, namely: the front pages of the nation's newspapers.

● It was in the final phase of the battle of Budapest that Pietro Nenni, leader of Italy's left-wing Socialists, joined other disillusioned pro-Communists in condemning Soviet actions in Hungary. Nenni returned his Stalin Peace Prize. But all that was a year ago. In the past twelve months Signor Nenni has overcome his scruples. Today he realizes that the position of the Communists "as leaders of the working class movement cannot be denied," and hence that Communism, Budapest or no Budapest, "must be supported." Accordingly, he and his party have resumed their "unity of action" alliance with Italy's Communist Party. The announcement was made the same week that the Kadar government abolished the Hungarian "workers' councils," the last institutional survivor of the Hungarian revolt.

● *New York Times* (Tuesday, November 12) headline, page one: "No Red Cells Found in Housing Agency." News story, page sixteen: "The Tenney

report included summaries of confidential reports already sent to the Mayor on nine Housing Authority employees. It noted that four had resigned, two had been dismissed, and that no action had been taken by the Housing Authority on the three others. . . . The Tenney report also declared that some evidence of Communist affiliation had been found in the cases of 136 other employees. . . . It should be noted that . . . [their] investigation is continuing." As usual, the *New York Times* is exercising sober self-restraint: scattered Communists must never be confused with "cells."

● *Erratum:* In this section of our last issue (November 23) we wrote of the refusal of the *Princeton Alumni Weekly* to accept an advertisement by "Mr. Charles Whitehead" pertaining to the controversy over Father Halton. The gentleman in question is Mr. Charles E. Whitehouse, Jr. of the class of 1916.

● The Peiping Ministry of Internal Security recently held an "exhibit of counter-revolutionary cases." On display were samples of the following materials listed as seized during the investigation of 716,503 cases uncovered from June 1955 to December 1956: 172,769 anti-Communist documents; 10,837 firearms; 525,402 rounds of ammunition; 57 radio transmitters. Teng Hsiao-ping, Secretary of the Communist Party's Central Committee, stated that the current "rectification" campaign will go on another ten years.

● In a letter to the *New York Times* Louis C. Wyman, Attorney General of the State of New Hampshire, charges that "certain recent decisions of the High Court, particularly in the security field, have . . . usurped congressional functions" by blatantly misinterpreting the intentions of Congress. Concurring with the National Association of Attorney Generals, Mr. Wyman urges that Congress restore "to each state the power to make it a crime to seek the overthrow of the United States within state borders," and that it redefine and broaden its mandates to the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee and to the House Committee on Un-American Activities. Mr. Wyman feels that the case of "America's self-protection" v. the Supreme Court should be decided by Congress.

● From a letter signed by Lester B. Granger, Executive Director of the National Urban League, Inc.: "For twenty years the Little Rock Urban League has enjoyed the trust and respect of the community's leaders of both races as it has worked to solve employment, housing and family living problems of Little Rock's Negro population. . . . [The League] has been interracial cooperation actually at work.

Today, because of the blackmail instigated by race-hate the Little Rock Urban League is no longer a member of the [Community] Chest, its officers have withdrawn in order to protect the existence of other social agencies." Subsequently, the Community Chests of New Orleans, Fort Worth, Jacksonville and Roanoke have expelled the League. The nation continues to reap the harvest sowed by the Supreme Court's dragon teeth.

● The headquarters of the Assembly of Captive European Nations, made up of outstanding exile representatives of the peoples of Eastern Europe now enslaved by the Kremlin, is on New York's First Avenue, just opposite the United Nations headquarters. On the morning of November 7, the fortieth anniversary of the Bolshevik insurrection, all UN officials and employees saw the following words blazoned on a huge poster stretched across the 35-foot front of the ACEN building:

FREE NATIONS: REMEMBER!
LENIN WARNED YOU:
"WE ARE NOT PACIFISTS. CONFLICT
IS INEVITABLE. GREAT
HISTORICAL QUESTIONS CAN BE
SOLVED ONLY BY VIOLENCE"

KHRUSHCHEV TOLD YOU:
"WE WILL BURY YOU."

● Our reaction to the if-we-don't-give-them-foreign-aid-the-USSR-will argument has always been: let's let the Soviets go ahead and win *that* competition, and impoverish themselves to their heart's desire. And now that Venezuela has announced a program of large-scale foreign aid, we are tempted to say "In the developing competition in foreign aid, let's give the little fellow a big chance. Let's let Venezuela take over for us completely for a year or two. News from Caracas suggests that Venezuela can afford it, which a glance at our stockholdings shows *we can't*." Evita Perón clearly foresaw what was to come when, in 1949, she dispatched a boatload of old clothes to the Potomac, addressed to the needy children of Washington, D.C.

● The City Council of Greensboro, North Carolina, has posted for auction two large swimming pools. The pools were built at public expense, one for whites, the other for Negroes. But late this summer a Negro woman presented herself at the whites' pool and, backed up by a brief case full of legal lore compiled by the NAACP, demanded to be permitted to swim. She was denied entrance; but, presumably rather than face litigation which would almost certainly have resulted in the Supreme Court's declaring that the authors of the Fourteenth Amendment

intended to rule out separate but equal recreational facilities, the Council quietly closed the pools and put them up for sale. What will happen, we assume, is that private concerns will buy and operate the pools—one for whites, the other for Negroes—on a commercial basis. We suggest to the officers of the NAACP that they undertake to build a third pool, and operate it as an integrated pool; and put their ideas to the test of the market place in Greensboro, N.C.

Wake Up and Sing!

Mr. Trevor Gardner, who quit his job in the Air Force a year ago in protest against what he denounced as a reckless neglect of missile development, is back in the news, suggesting that in the light of Sputnik and all that it portends, the United States restore to J. Robert Oppenheimer the security clearance it withdrew in 1954. Promptly, a number of scientists seconded the suggestion—in the name of National Security.

We go along with Mr. Gardner and the scientists in adjudging our situation one of crisis, and agree that all good men should come to the aid of their country. We do not know what Dr. Oppenheimer, his training and experience having been in a different field, is in a position to contribute to the national security in the way of practical help in developing guided missiles. We feel sure, however, that he is, and has been right along, in a position to contribute information which might assist us in apprehending those enemies of our country who continue to burrow after those poor secrets that are still left to us. Two panels of distinguished men denied Dr. Oppenheimer

a security clearance not because they wanted to punish him for past misdeeds, but because, his story having been heard, they felt they could not trust him. They could not trust him because, in their judgment, he had not really come clean: he had admittedly lied and deceived the government in the past; and they could not be certain—how can one be by the record?—that even now he spoke the truth.

We are all in favor of benefiting from Dr. Oppenheimer's genius; and with Mr. Gardner and the scientists, we favor, in the name of national security, bold action. How badly off we are, in terms of relative scientific progress in the past few years, must be especially clear to someone of the scientific vision of Dr. Oppenheimer. Let him then prove that he is prepared to respond to the challenge to his country; let him call in the FBI, and start talking.

Having done so, we have no doubt the security board would reverse its recommendation of 1954.

Permission to Survive?

We have already observed how promptly the Liberals put Sputnik to work to reinforce the case for some of their more popular projects, not the least of which is the easing of security precautions. It was the fear-laden atmosphere of the McCarthy years—the Liberals long contended—that suffocated our scientists and put the Russians ahead of us. Fortunately most Americans, once they grasped this proposition, simply laughed at it.

But now this clay pigeon has been given a new coat of paint and is back again in a more seductive guise. If the domestic security laws cannot be attacked directly, perhaps they can be crippled indirectly. Let us (the Liberals now urge) tear down the barriers of secrecy within the Western alliance. Why should America, Britain and France wastefully duplicate each others' research efforts in such fields as atomic physics and rocketry? Why not tell each other what we're doing? Why not, for that matter, divide the work and thus get it done more quickly?

NATIONAL REVIEW is all in favor of concerted efforts, if they can be engaged in safely. But let us not forget why American research was divorced from that of Britain and France in the first place. The leading atomic physicist of France, Pierre Joliot-Curie, is an avowed Communist. At least two of the top atomic physicists of England—Klaus Fuchs and Bruno Pontecorvo—committed espionage for the Russians. Ought we, in a panic over Sputnik, to be stampeded into sharing highly classified technical knowledge with nations so easily conned?

And behind this question looms another. If Britain or France does some day furnish us with some miss-

(Continued on page 487)



Kreuttner

"Although nothing can be learned from the past, History tells us that we could have avoided every one of our past wars simply by knuckling under!"

The Rediscount Rate as Omen

The rediscount rate is the Federal Reserve Bank's interest charge on loans it makes to other banks. In itself the November 15 reduction has little direct economic significance. Commercial banks are not going to borrow more money at the Federal Reserve Bank merely because it has lowered its rate from $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 per cent. They cannot borrow more if their loans are at the legal limit; and they will not want to borrow more unless they can relend profitably to commercial borrowers. A lowering of the rediscount rate does not in itself either create more money and credit or more demand for credit. It does not, as it is commonly put, "ease" the money situation.

In fact, this move by the Federal Reserve Board trailed rather than led the market (which is, let us quickly add, as it should be). Money and credit have been spontaneously easing, as demand lessened; and during the past two months interest rates on Treasury obligations, municipal and corporate bonds, and commercial paper have been falling. Thus the drop in the rediscount rate (the normal level of which is a bit below the going rate for prime commercial loans) is a formal recognition that, as one Reserve Board official remarked, "inflation, at least temporarily, has ceased to be a dominant factor in the economy."

The Board would thus seem to be confirming what the stock market has been shouting since July, and what more delicate voices began whispering a year ago: the great postwar boom is over, for a while at least. The immediate prospect ahead is deflationary, not inflationary; the unanswered question is how long and how far, and what is to be done about it. The shift to a deflationary trend is concealed by the still continuing rise in consumer prices. But consumer prices, the last end product of the economic process, lag many months behind the forces bearing on the points of production.

There is nothing arbitrary in this cooling off of the boom. As in other booms, the expansive period brought economic excesses and dislocations, many of them exaggerated by huge government spending and cheap government-supplied credit. Consumer credit alone (installment and charge account) has risen, since 1945, from \$5.7 to \$43.0 billion; and business credit has risen comparably. Today there are twice as many autos as at the end of the war, and ten million more houses. Many industries—copper, nickel, aluminum, steel, paper, auto, TV and radio, major household appliances, etc.—having satisfied pent-up postwar demands, have expanded to a capacity beyond what the current market can absorb. They have therefore decreased their orders for new machines and plants, and reduced their operations; even so, output is running ahead of new orders in

many companies, and inventories at all levels are at all-time highs.

In correction of such conditions, the curve reverses. Production is cut. (The Federal Reserve Board production index reached its high of 147 last December and is now down to 143.) The average work week is shortened, and there are layoffs. These factors are now being reflected in recent figures showing small declines in manufacturing employment, personal income and consumer expenditures.

From an economic standpoint there is nothing "unhealthy" in the shift of the cycle. On the contrary: it was the boom that had become unhealthy, and the economy can only gain for the long run from a correction of the distortions that have in some directions reached dangerous levels. Yet it is a fact that such a correction means relative hardships for many individuals. Without such inconveniences the correction cannot be accomplished. Because of the inconveniences there are certain to be—there are already—powerful pressures on the government "to do something" to reverse the downtrend, and to set the boom once more to booming.

A large portion of the pressure will first zero in on the Federal Reserve Board. The Governors will be urged to generalize and deepen the cut in the rediscount rate; and then to go on to measures that would expand and "ease" the credit supply: lowering of the commercial banks' reserve requirements, and open market purchases of Treasury obligations.

But these measures will not in the event accomplish much. Experience has shown that though a deliberate tightening of credit by the money managers can sometimes restrain a boom, the loosening of credit has little effect in stimulating one. Witness the easy-money deflated economy of the late 30's. If there is no profitable use for credit, it doesn't matter much how easy it is to come by.

Therefore the next step will be demanded: that the government itself use the easy credit that it has itself created; that is, a program of expanded public works, pump priming, subsidies, stockpiling, indiscriminate arms spending, paid for not by taxes but by deficit financing, by government loans on the easy terms brought about by the Federal Reserve Board maneuvers. With 1958 an election year, with the Sputniks as a ready excuse, and with the brilliant, relatively orthodox Humphrey-Burgess-Overby trio that ran the Eisenhower Treasury now out of office, the resistance to these pressures is not likely to prove formidable.

The cost of yielding would be high. The economy would move toward one or the other of two catastrophes: wild, bushel-basket inflation; or deep, prolonged depressions of a sub-1932 order.

ing scrap of atomic information, will we then be faced with the demand that they be consulted before we use it? Doesn't the whole history of Liberal strategy suggest that, once we have "pooled our knowledge," we will be told that we must also pool the right to use that knowledge? In the day of ultimate peril, will our right to defend ourselves with atomic bombs and missiles hinge upon the approval of Foreign Minister Bevan, or on the complexion of the latest organized coalition in France?

Easy does it.

The Outward Shows

In the past few weeks the curtain has gone up on two political burlesques in Latin America, the response to which by the press is a measure of the importance Americans attach to dotting the i's of hypocrisies. In Venezuela, Pérez Jiménez is boss, and everybody knows it. Just the same, there is to be, a few weeks hence, an "election" in Venezuela, at which the population will have the option of approving of Pérez Jiménez or—well, no one is exactly sure or what. Indeed, we have here a travesty on democracy, and the press is duly exercised—and has a right to be. Not so much because Venezuela is hardly a true democracy (it is not self-evident that democracy is the best thing for Venezuela, any more than it proved to be for Argentina during the period when, plainly, Perón was democracy's choice); Venezuela's offense, in the forthcoming election, is one of humbuggery.

The Republic of Mexico, on the other hand, observes the forms much more carefully, and for her pains is generally regarded as a democratic nation. Two weeks ago the word was out that Adolfo Mateos is to be nominated by the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* to succeed Ruiz Cortines. We happen to know how these things proceed in Mexico. Cortines and two or three strongmen decide whom they want. PRI is given the word. One sunny day (every day is sunny in Mexico) the Brotherhood of Revolutionary Bricklayers (or some other union) takes out a full page ad in a large local daily announcing that the will of revolutionary bricklayers must not be thwarted: the most excellent, most patriotic, most beneficent Adolfo Mateos (whose name, by the way, is probably not known, at this point, to a thousand Mexicans) must be nominated by PRI to satisfy the people's enlightened cravings. The next day five unions take full page ads. The following day two dozen. Meanwhile, painters start proclaiming the virtues of Don Adolfo quite literally on the housetops; and on street cars, walls, bull fight arenas, the name of Adolfo Mateos appears. By election day next July, Adolfo Mateos' only serious opponent for national attention

will be Coca-Cola. PRI will hold a democratic convention. The nation will have a democratic election campaign (complete with live opposition candidates) and . . . the voice of the people will triumph on election day.

PRI has never lost an election and, our guess is, will not lose one except, some day off in the future, to a new set of "revolutionaries" (who are sure to justify *their* revolution in the name of democracy). But behold how it pays off to observe carefully, in the community of nations, the ritualisms of self-rule. Nobody even titters when Mexico is spoken of as a democracy.

Notes Toward the Definition of Coexistence

While the representatives of the free nations were busily drinking official toasts to the triumphs of Communism in the prolonged celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Bolshevik insurrection, and negotiating new projects of cultural and scientific exchange, the general staff of the world revolution moved somewhat impatiently ahead with a minor project on its current agenda.

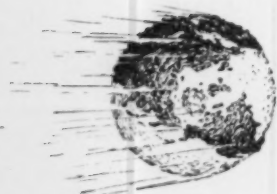
By his unthinkable acts of defiance last winter, King Hussein of Jordan had caused his name to be shifted to the priority section of the Kremlin's proscription list. Clearly, an example must be made of him, if the Mideastern thrust is to advance with the planned speed and smoothness.

But the Khrushchev style does not waste breath on polite evasions. The cry from Moscow, echoing promptly from Cairo's Voice of the Arabs radio and the mobs of Palestinian refugees in Damascus, is Bolshevik diplomacy, for the 1957-58 season.

"King Hussein has chosen the path leading to treachery and subservience to imperialism. No one but King Hussein himself is responsible for the tragic fate in store for him. Let Hussein die like the dog his grandfather!" (Hussein's grandfather, King Abdullah, was assassinated outside the mosque of Oman, in 1951.)

It must be admitted that Khrushchev makes sufficiently plain what *he* means by coexistence.

Our Contributors: ISABEL PATERSON ("Learning to Read: Child's Play") will be remembered by our readers for "The Southern Breakthrough" (December 21, 1955) and "The Oracles Are Dumb" (May 23, 1956). She is the author of several books, among them *God of the Machine*. . . . STEPHEN J. TONSOR ("Roots of German Conservatism") is an instructor in the Department of History, University of Michigan.



The THIRD WORLD WAR

JAMES BURNHAM

Disinformation Bureaus

One curious symptom of the Red psychosis—an endemic Western obsession currently aggravated by the Sputnik fallout—is a compulsive tendency to believe everything positive that is said about matters Soviet, and to discount everything negative.

Everyone believes, for example, that the Russian average standard of living is much higher today than in Czarist times, although there is no evidence whatever to support this belief.

Everyone points to the announced huge numbers of Russian bombers and warships as proof that they have a terrific, possibly supreme air force and navy. No one recalls that the Russians have had no experience in the incredibly difficult tactics of strategic bombings, and that their navy has a centuries-old tradition of getting licked.

Everyone talks about “the advanced, mechanized agriculture” of a Soviet farm system that requires half of the country’s labor force to work on the land.

Everyone is telling everyone that the Soviet Union is miles ahead of us in scientific and technological education. Blotted out of mind is what millions of Western soldiers learned at first hand in the war: that most Russian mechanics and engineers were poorly and narrowly trained. Why should we expect it to be otherwise in a land so meagerly equipped with mechanical gadgets?

Everyone can prove that the Red Army is the world’s most imposing; few give a thought to the fact that scores of divisions would probably fight against, not for, the Kremlin, or to the probable effect on military morale of the disgracing of the army’s chief commander-hero.

As for Sputniks

On November 7, 90 per cent of the free world’s astronomers stayed up

all night in order not to miss the planting of the hammer and sickle on the moon. (All honor, in passing, to the bull-headed 10 per cent.)

Take this Sputnik business more generally. Somebody put some radio-beeping hardware up in orbit around the earth. That’s true, because we can see and hear it. And let’s grant it was the Russians who did it, though that of course is an inference rather than an observation. What more do we know? Hundreds of things, according to what we read in all papers: that Sputnik I weighs 184 lbs., Sputnik II 1,120 lbs.; that they carry masses of instruments, maybe even infrared cameras and mapping machines, transmitting twenty kinds of data; that these objects were hurled from the earth’s surface by the huge propulsive mechanisms of developed ICBM rockets; that a dog was in Sputnik II, etc.

These items, if true, are important not so much in themselves as for inferences that could be drawn concerning Soviet capabilities and intentions.

Have we, then, any reason to believe them true? None whatever. They *may* be true, but we have no reason to think so. We should, in fact, *presume* them to be false.

The evidence for them is *solely* what the Russians have *said*, and this is about as poor as evidence can be. There is no scientific method to check the weight of these or any similar satellites from observation of them in orbit. They might weigh only a tenth of what the Russians say.

We have no independent evidence that they were fired from the ground. They might have been launched from a balloon by low power rockets, in the manner of our Operation Farside. The beep of Sputnik I seemed able to transmit no more than one set of data—possibly, internal temperature. Sputnik II’s voice was more varied, but not enough for the articu-

lation with which it has been credited.

Nor do we have the slightest reason to believe that Laika, the dog, went up in Sputnik II. We, and all the world, have seen the pictures of a cute dog dressed up in a space suit. She is one of the great publicity coups of all time. But as to whether she really went up into space we know nothing.

Let’s Be from Missouri

Normal human discourse rests on a presumption of truth. The general public is not equipped to evaluate a mode of communication that has deception as its deliberate purpose. Yet such a system of disinformation has become a routine part of the activities of *all* governments today, most largely of the Soviet government.

In all major countries, very clever men study how to deceive and confuse the enemy—and in the process everyone else—by subtle, undetectable methods. Our own disinformation experts, for example, have made elaborate studies, with large-scale experiments, of how best to get a rumor spread and believed. (They have found that you should *not* start the rumor chain with the falsehood you want believed, but should allow smart people to deduce the desired falsehood from several seemingly independent items.) In the Soviet Union there are special disinformation training schools for home office personnel, regular international agents, agents who will arrive in the free world as “defectors,” etc.

All over the world the facts bearing on military power are covered by an intricate fabric of falsehood. In a scientific journal, a small symbol will have been altered; in business reports, the statistics on a rare metal will have been faked a little; in an army release, performance figures will have been shifted a few per cent; in the published budget, innocent entries will hide underground “black operations”; a key error will have been planted on an over-eager columnist, or an official preparing for a press conference.

This is, in short, an age when there is a lot to be said for the “Show me” skepticism of the traditional man from Missouri.

Learning to Read: Child's Play

Teaching a child to read is easy: all you need to do is channel his intelligence and curiosity—and shield him from 'Progressive' teachers

ISABEL PATERSON

Since parents began to protest that their children were not being taught to read, write, spell, or master elementary arithmetic in the public schools, the response from the teaching profession has been overwhelming. The spate of verbiage poured forth, in counter-offensive and justification, by "educators" and "educationalists," is beyond computation without an electronic calculator.

I have not studied this edifying output at length. To be candid, much of it is written in a peculiar and hideous jargon (called "teacher talk" by one of its exponents) from which the human eye rebounds like a tennis ball. Possibly the dialect does double duty; aside from the content, it might be offered in evidence to show why teachers would hardly consider reading and writing desirable accomplishments. One teacher did vouch that the reason "why Johnny can't read" is that he, the teacher, didn't think it necessary. Fussy parents who remain dissatisfied with the veracious simplicity of that statement have a wide and various choice of other answers. That the answers do not agree precisely shouldn't be held against them. Irrelevance is the most effective aid to stupidity in an indefensible position. If the unconvinced complainers aren't wearied into acquiescence, they may be baffled beyond hope of ever getting to the point.

Thus it has been asserted that the public schools are no worse than they always were, which is to say that they never did teach Johnny to read. This appeal to tradition was documented by comparison of marked report cards for pupils past and present, although marks nowadays appear to be subjective flights of fancy. Lately I saw in a note from a child this arresting bit of news: "I got strate A's in spelling." I don't doubt it. But I am bound to admit that she is a highly gifted child. (Modern authorities on educa-

tion say that the gifted or notably intelligent child is a grave problem in school.)

Another explanation is that a teacher is obliged to wait indefinitely for "reading readiness" in a child. By what token the readiness becomes manifest is not clear. Other teachers seem to intimate—they don't make an explicit offer—that if their salaries were jacked up they could, or would, really teach their pupils something. Or perhaps they mean that jacked-up salaries would hire better teachers; I cannot be positive which.

Some years ago teachers sternly admonished parents *not* to teach their children at home because that would conflict with the methods used in school. Home-taught children, able to read, would throw a school class into dire confusion. But recently I came upon an article by a teacher urging parents to teach their own children to read, with the provision that the said parents must consult the teacher. Presumably the teacher would impart to the parents the method by which the children failed to learn to read in school. I have before me an article which sets forth the "so-called word recognition method." This method requires "a bombardment of pictures labelled with words." But, the article asks, "what's to prevent Johnny from confusing B-A-L-L with F-A-L-L when the picture is missing?" Do not suggest idiotically that Johnny can tell B from F if he has learned the alphabet. Johnny has not learned the alphabet, and what's more, he isn't going to if his teacher can head him off. An assistant in the library of a famous university informs me that students who do not know the alphabet matriculate there. I doubt if they stay the course; but what of it? Under bombardment, Johnny has been so "stimulated to evaluate" and his "understanding has been deepened" so profoundly by "visualizing chicks and

cows" and saying moo, moo and peep, peep, instead of "memorizing the spelling and parroting the pronunciation" of words, that it would be superfluous for him to attend a university.

Shocking Episode

If heedless parents should instruct their children secretly, I know what would happen. An unfortunate child was left in my care while her mother was in hospital. And the child had to stay at home for a week on account of a bad cold. Aged seven, she had spent a full year in school; and by some oversight she had picked up most of the alphabet. During that week I taught her to read. It was sheer indolence on my part; teaching her was the easiest way to keep her occupied. She liked learning. (So do most children; it is their nature to.) The episode is more shocking inasmuch as I had no textbook, and used some of Kipling's verse as reading matter, because it was at hand. Subsequently, at the end of the quarterly term, I happened to see the child's report card. Her teacher had written on it: "You will notice that Susie has now learned to read *by our method*." (My italics.) I'm sorry I don't know the method of that school by which a bright child takes a year to learn most of the alphabet. And I must add that the child's real name is not Susie. I don't want to bring the authentic Susies under suspicion at school.

The deplorable truth is that on chance occasions I have taught quite a few children to read, with no failures. Most culpably, the way I teach scarcely deserves to be called a method. Nobody could spend years acquiring it. And it is too late for me to reform. I began when I was ten years old, teaching three younger children to read. At that age I spent

five or six weeks on the job, teaching an hour or so daily; however, writing and spelling lessons were included. My pupils had learned the alphabet previously. Nobody then knew enough to stop them; it was an era of dark ignorance. Nobody had heard of "reading readiness"; and I certainly did not crave to teach. My mother set me the task, and my juniors were ordered to learn. So I did and they did.

It wasn't painful; I was rather interested to discover that they did not all learn exactly alike, though I taught them alike. (That is all right because *they* do the learning, each in his or her own way from the same material.) The difference is in the two types of mind, one type which tends to memorize by graphic form and position, that is, by the eye-memory of an artist; and the other type which seems to incline more to ear-memory, by sounds; each of course reverses to to recall *both* sounds and shapes. But you have to watch for the eye-memory in the beginning, or a young child may spell the word at the top of a spelling list when you have asked for the word at the bottom—because the child learned the spelling in the order from top to bottom, and is mentally recalling it in that order. All you need to do then is to point out the error, and the child will correct it. Eye-memory may be the slower in the beginning; on the other hand, after some correct practice, it may become extraordinarily quick; the artist's eye is indeed a seeing eye.

The sad aspect of this juvenile episode is that I didn't get a "thrill" out of it; whereas "progressive" teachers are "thrilled" if a child recognizes a word (though of course he can't spell it). If Johnny actually learned to read I fear a progressive teacher would be stricken with St. Vitus' dance. Or would he be dismayed? My own insensibility I attribute to a wrong habit of mind. I expect children to learn. They also expect to learn. We are reasonably pleased by the accordant result; but it lacks the novelty, the *frisson*, of surprise.

Having given due notice that trouble will probably ensue if parents teach their children to read, I may as well proceed to tell them how to get into trouble with the least exertion, if they are bent upon it. First, we may

answer the question, "why Johnny can't read," by general propositions.

1. If a child past mere infancy cannot read, there can be only two alternative reasons:

Either it is incapable of learning to read,

Or it has not been taught.

This is a logical proposition.

2. Any child of normal intelligence (including sight and hearing) is capable of learning to read from the time it can speak in apposite, intelligible sentences.

This is demonstrable by experiment. But the assertion that the child is capable of learning to read is a rational induction from the given premise that it has already learned to talk. Because the intellectual process of reading is essentially the same as that of apposite speech, differing only in the specific opportunities of learning naturally open to an infant. In both instances it is a process of abstraction and intermediate notation by arbitrary signs indicating things, actions, relations, everything that language can communicate. In speech the signs are vocal sounds. In reading the signs are visible marks. The baby doesn't need formal lessons in order to learn speech, because in company of adults it hears the sounds and simultaneously sees objects, actions, etc., which they signify.

Babies: Intellectual Beings

Having learned speech, learning to read is literal child's play. The only difficulty is obviated by brief and simple formal instruction; which is necessary because otherwise the external features of the process are not wholly visible and audible. If one reads a book silently in the presence of a baby there is no clue whatever to the process involved. If one reads aloud, still the words are unlikely to signify anything in view to which the baby can refer or attach them; and there is no evidence that the words are derived from the book. At best, the child may get the impression that it is proper to hold a book while talking at random.

A baby is as nearly a pure intellectual being as possible. Its very first mental employment involves abstraction; with its vision not yet focused for detail, what it observes is the relative position of objects in space, an

impersonal concept. When hungry or uncomfortable it cries, but it does not *think* of its own needs, neither in retrospect nor anticipation. It is engaged in contemplation, in learning something of the nature of the universe. And a baby's power of learning is so prodigious that if we did not take it for granted we should be in a constant state of amazement. The advantage of the adult consists largely in what he has gained from experience by means of that native power. That power of conscious knowledge does not belong to a creature which exists by adapting itself to its environment; it connotes a being who lives by adapting its environment to itself. (And that's where Darwin left himself and modern education out on a limb.)

Presumably the reason we do not fully appreciate the marvelous intellectual feats performed by babies is that we have forgotten the actual experience and truly we cannot imagine ourselves back into the condition of an infant. There is not even a fair analogy available. We cannot imagine ourselves as situated in a physical universe of which we have no knowledge whatever, no comparable experience by which to apprehend any part of it, no speech to ask questions, no physical means at first to move about freely—"no nothing," in the vernacular. *That* is starting from scratch. And that's what a baby does. Within a year it has usually got going on its own feet, utilized its mobility to investigate the qualities of things by its five senses, begun to observe conduct, and attained a basic knowledge of speech. A baby understands a good deal of speech before it can talk, because it hears clearly before it can articulate intelligibly. Also it becomes aware of time, of time elapsed rather than future time, at about the age of ten months; I don't know how and neither does anyone else.

Now if reading and writing were used for communication among adults only by means of a blackboard and reading aloud, with the alphabet permanently inscribed above, every child would learn to read as early as it learns to talk. (I trust that nobody who reads this will be over-persuaded to the extent of demanding that adults confine themselves to the blackboard method as described above. It is

neither necessary nor convenient. But would that objection give pause to a progressive pedagogue? It never has; rather it seems to spur him on. I shudder at the prospect.)

Anyhow, the longer instruction in reading is deferred after the child can speak, the less "ready" the child will be, because the extreme rapidity with which a young child observes and memorizes tends to slow down and diminish. During the period when a child is memorizing something new every waking hour, twenty-six items, the letters of the alphabet (one of the greatest inventions of mankind) slipped into the young mind one by one, are as easy as pie. Yet those twenty-six signs, mostly denoted in sound by monosyllables, contain all the components of words, the elements of reading. I am not saying that it is imperative that a child should learn to read in its second year; I am saying that it is easily possible. Of course the child can still learn quickly for a good many years; but I should certainly advise that it be taught to read by the age of five, or earlier if you like, because early reading tends to facilitate correct spelling. Also rapid and correct readers usually have learned early.

Begin then by teaching the alphabet. It won't take very long, if you will be so kind as to refrain from distracting the child by blather about cows and chicks or saying this letter looks like something else and see the curly tail of that letter and B stands for blah-blah. With the complete alphabet in its usual order before the child, point to a letter, say "That is A" or B or C, etc.; and have the child repeat it. One letter may be enough for one lesson. (It would save time and effort if the alphabet were shown in four types, that is, printing and cursive each in both capitals and small letters, and in four lines, so that each letter can be identified in its four types at once. If you think the child won't understand their identity, you are mistaken. Odds on it has better brains than you have.) After several repetitions, ask the child to name the letter without your naming it first. Also recite the whole alphabet and have the child repeat it after you. That's all, until the child can name each letter at sight and recite the alphabet by heart.

Then go on to reading, and teach

it in just the same way, naming a word, having the child spell it out, and giving the child the sounds of the letters in the word. As soon as a child has caught onto a few short words, tell it that long words are no harder to read than short ones, being made up of short sections. Don't push the child; but insist on correctness; do not allow the child to mumble, jumble, guess and give up. Guessing can be averted by proper timing; if a child can't remember, naturally it will hesitate; then you must name the letter or word before guessing begins.

Never be impatient. A child naturally accepts parental authority, and will do the best it can if it is not terrified or distracted. Don't grudge praise on just occasion.

Finally, the younger the child, the briefer the lesson should be. If you undertake to teach a child between two and three years old, five minutes is long enough to exact close attention, increasing to an hour or so by the age of seven. If the attention of an infant could be fixed for a considerable time, it would have no chance of survival in a world containing a multiplicity of objects which may impinge on it and which therefore must be observed at a glance. Two or three lessons may be given in a day if you choose. One a day will ensure a steady advance. If you will pay attention yourself you will see when the child is really unable to concentrate any longer; let that end the lesson. In compensation, the child has an astounding faculty of learning in a flash.

Trouble Ahead

Very well, the result will be that Johnny can read, and you and he will both be in for plenty of trouble. At school Johnny will be given insipid rubbish to putter over, until he is bored to stupefaction. You'll have to maintain his interest in reading at home. It is unlikely that he will get any higher marks. The prevailing system of marks was contrived to "equalize" the children, not to record the facts.

What Johnny and his parents are up against is a nation-wide vested interest of professionals who draw six years pay for teaching a child rather less than it could learn in about the

equivalent of a year's time in school. There is also a paid lobby to advocate that interest, and a lot of politicians anxious for votes. And there is officialdom in general, the fraternity of bureaucrats, always ready to spring to the aid of their kind. Finally, though of much slighter influence, there are publishers whose "backlog" of textbooks is important to them—and a deep gouge in the taxpayer. Johnny's illiteracy is a valuable property, not precisely for him, but for a great many other people, who have put themselves across as the recognized authorities on education. To meddle with their major asset is to invite unpredictable reprisals.

Here is a curious item which got into the public press. Mr. and Mrs. Charles Dameron of Silver Springs, Md., adopted an eight-months-old baby girl, named Dori. Mr. Dameron is a Washington city fireman. The Damerons own their home. They are both comparatively young, of pleasing appearance; and Dori looks happy, in a family photo. Dori has grown to be two and a half years old and the Damerons thought it would be nice for her to have a brother. They applied to Maryland's Montgomery Social Service League to adopt a boy baby. The Social Service League said no, they would not allow the Damerons to adopt another child. Why not? Well, little Dori had been "tested." *She could read.* The Damerons had taught her! Dori (not the Damerons, of course) was accorded a very high IQ because she could read—an accomplishment which any normal child could be taught, by the same age. Miss Elizabeth Montgomery, of the Social Service League, said: "If we had another very bright child, we would place it in a home we considered **had superior advantages.**"

Let that be a lesson to you, if you intend to teach your Johnny to read. And don't say I didn't warn you. Some official egghead will surely find or make occasion to insult you publicly, personally, and gratuitously—for bucking the system. Still, if you are determined, here's luck; and in the long run Johnny may thank you.

(Reprints of this article are available at 15 cents each, 100 for \$10.00. Address Department R, NATIONAL REVIEW, 211 East 37th St., New York 16, N.Y.)

III. A Final Answer to the Liberal Position on Free Speech?

WILLMOORE KENDALL

Walter Berns' new book¹ would be a "must" for readers of NATIONAL REVIEW even had he contented himself with doing that which we have already noticed, namely: making clear the incompatibility between the Liberal cult of freedom as the highest good and the requirements of good government as defined in the Preamble of our Constitution. Actually, however, Berns does much more than that: he pursues Liberal constitutional thought and practice to their very bases in Liberal political theory, and reads the Liberals the sternest lectures they have ever heard from an American political scientist. And the sternest of these lectures is in connection with the problem of loyalty.

Berns holds that the Smith Act, under which Eugene Dennis went to jail, adds a "new dimension" to our constitutional law: Congress, with the blessing of the Supreme Court in the Dennis case, has now given us a statute that makes it a crime to hold certain ideas. The "evil that Congress sought to prevent" in passing it was not the overthrow of the government by force and violence, but "advocacy of this idea"; the Act "does not say that such advocacy is bad only when there is a danger that it will lead to the overthrow, but . . . that such advocacy, like heresy of old, is always bad." The question in the Dennis case, therefore, was whether, in passing such a law, Congress had exceeded its constitutional powers. "The case represents the end of a one-way street for our liberal justices who have regarded free speech as a right of American citizenship . . . [and it] might possibly contain a lesson worth our while to find and reflect upon."

As we would expect, Berns—unlike most persons who have spoken of the Dennis decision in such terms—thinks Congress did not exceed its

constitutional powers; his target is not the Supreme Court majority that upheld the Smith Act, but Justice Douglas' dissenting opinion, which held that "Full and free discussion has indeed been the first article of our faith."

Berns' major point is that like "all faiths unsupported by reason . . . [faith] in full and free discussion is . . . contradicted . . . by reflection upon its unwarranted presuppositions . . ."

Berns forces the issue with all his might: The Smith Act, he argues, defines loyalty "negatively"—as the "absence of disloyalty"; Douglas would add to this a "positive element," namely, the "belief in full and free discussion." So, he notes, would Sidney Hook, who writes: "The liberal stands ready to defend the honest heretic no matter what his views against any attempt to curb him"—a "heresy" being, on Hook's showing, a "set of unpopular ideas or opinions on any matter of grave concern to the community." Berns summarizes the position as follows: "In America, despite the fact that Communism, cannibalism, and head-hunting are unpopular, honest Communists, cannibals and head-hunters must be given a fair shake and the liberal will help them get it . . . Except that they are denied to conspirators, civil liberties are indivisible. Having turned from judicial opinions in order to find a more philosophical . . . discussion . . . we achieve a conclusion . . . in no way superior to that culled from judicial opinions."

But, Berns proceeds to show, the Douglas-Hook position will not do. If "the cause to which the liberal is loyal is the cause of full and free discussion," then it should be "a matter of indifference to him which of the competing doctrines or ideas emerges triumphant." But it isn't a matter of indifference: Hook, for example, does not conceal his fear of "the systematic corruption of the free

market by activities which make intelligent choice impossible." And, Berns reasons, once that word "intelligent" gets into the discussion, the position becomes repugnant to reason: "... if it is intelligent choice the liberal wants, would it not be reasonable and feasible for him to exclude the unintelligent proposals . . .? . . . If Professor Hook is prepared to define 'intelligent' (his word), he can also define 'unintelligent,' and why anyone should permit the community to choose an unintelligent doctrine like Marxism or Fascism, if there is a chance he can prevent it, is one of those liberal mysteries comprehensible only to the initiated."

And then the lecture: "The purpose to which liberals ask us to be loyal is not really a purpose but an empty process. . . . Before any reasonable man can give his loyalty to such a purpose he will want some assurance that the doctrine that will achieve popularity is one with which he is sympathetic . . . [The liberal] cannot say that Communism is evil because it commits terrible deeds . . . He cannot say that anything is unjust, because he refuses to concede that one definition of justice is more reasonable than another . . . So it is we are told that the good American is loyal to a process . . . But . . . a process . . . is not a cause unless one has no concern with the results, and it is not a reasonable cause in any case. Freedom cannot be that cause to which we can be loyal; there must be another cause to which the good American is loyal."

What cause? Berns takes his answer from Aristotle: "The good man," as Berns puts it, "is a good citizen in a good regime. . . . [And we] must ever be alert to maintain the identity of a good man and a good American." If we do that, he continues, what we end up with is the idea that the good American is loyal not to a process, not to freedom, but to moral principle—and with the answer we need for Justice Douglas: "... [A] good regime cannot trust bad men . . . The United States cannot trust Eugene Dennis. [And] this means that it is legitimate and on occasion necessary to deny [bad] men the freedom to perform bad acts, such as teaching and advocating an immoral political doctrine. . . ."

1. *Freedom, Virtue and the First Amendment* (Louisiana State University Press, \$4.00). Discussed in "The Liberal Line," Nov. 16 and 23.

From the Academy

RUSSELL KIRK

The Test of an Author

Even writers successful in their own age do not obtain their full influence until long later. Although Thomas Aquinas' works were well known in the thirteenth century, they were not made the official philosophy of the Catholic Church until the nineteenth century. Plutarch's *Lives of the Noble Greeks and Romans* have been popular in different ages, but probably had a more direct influence upon character and society in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries than ever before. St. Augustine's writings took on a renewed meaning, after the elapse of eleven centuries, in the struggles of the Reformation. Cicero was a great man in his own time, and some of his books have been studied ever since; but the one most widely read nowadays, his *Republic*, was lost during the whole period between the fall of Rome and the nineteenth century, remaining unknown to anyone until 1820, when an ancient manuscript of it was discovered.

Here in America, Irving Babbitt—whose first book was published fifty years ago—was so disheartened by attacks on his writings that he advised his students, if they used his ideas, never to mention his name. Yet new printings and paperback editions of several of his books have appeared in the past two years, and second-hand copies of the others are eagerly sought after by the rising generation of American college students. Vernon Parrington, the author of *Main Currents in American Thought*, spent his life as a professor of English at the University of Washington, little heard of, and part of his great work was not published until after his death; yet few books have done more to affect the intellectual climate of modern America.

Many writers, though honored for their achievement, have exerted their influence through popularizers and disciples, rather than directly through their principal books—and some of

them in ways they least expected. Francis Bacon's *Novum Organum*, though so long famous, has been read by very few people at any time since the sixteenth century: it has made itself felt, rather, by its influence on other authors and upon scientists. Darwin's *Origin of Species* has inspired whole schools of philosophical and social speculation, as well as a great body of scientific literature, but—except for a brief period during the nineteenth century—could not be considered a popular book. Jeremy Bentham, an eccentric and wealthy recluse, was the father of English and American Liberalism; yet most of his writings have not yet been published, and those which are in print are fragmentary and little read. Sir Isaac Newton, though his books on astronomy and mathematics set the pattern of scientific thought down to our time, through many vulgarizations of his principles, was not himself especially interested in the consequences of his ideas; indeed, his real love was the study of magic and witchcraft, though the great bulk of his writings on such topics never has got into print. John Maynard Keynes' theories have helped to alter the whole form of Western governmental and economic organization; yet though he was a lucid writer, and comparatively popular for an economist, the sales of his books were restricted to a few thousand copies.

Perhaps the most amusing case of an author's fame being unrelated to his own expectation is that of Charles Dodgson, the Victorian mathematician, whose treatises on mathematics are quite unknown nowadays. Under his pseudonym of Lewis Carroll, however, he wrote *Alice in Wonderland* for the pleasure of a little girl; and that book, with *Through the Looking-Glass*, has formed the characters of children ever since. Sometimes the books with the greatest impact were intended to have no impact at all.

Fifty years from now, or twenty years, or even ten years, the historical romances and the "tough" novels of twentieth-century life and the current-affairs books which sell by the hundreds of thousands in 1957 will be gathering dust in complete neglect. But some books of enduring meaning which sell only a few thousand copies, and receive little attention in the popular press—such novels as Wyndham Lewis' *Self Condemned*, for instance, or Geoffrey Wagner's *The Dispossessed*—will escape the tooth of time and will give their authors a reputation far exceeding their influence while they lived.

Fifty Years from Now

One serious author who will be read fifty years from now, I think, is Dr. Eric Voegelin. The first volume of his great work, *Order and History*, has recently been published by a university press; probably its sales will not exceed one or two thousand copies, though just possibly, like Toynbee's *Study of History*, it may break through to a larger public. *Order and History* will live because it deals, in its most scholarly fashion, with the great problems of history and theology and human nature which recur in every generation; and it is the best twentieth-century analysis of those problems. Yet it is highly improbable that many people will buy or read it. When Mr. Voegelin's important little book *The New Science of Politics* appeared in 1952, *Time* gave it a front cover and a long leading article. Yet only 1,500 copies have been sold. Contrast this with the sales, say, of a lurid novel like *The Naked and the Dead*. No one will have heard of *The Naked and the Dead* fifty years from now; while *The New Science of Politics*, directly or indirectly, will be helping to guide thought and society a good deal longer than fifty years.

To quote Isaac Disraeli, "It is melancholy to reflect that some of the greatest works in our language have involved their authors in distress and anxiety; and that many have gone down to their grave insensible of that glory which soon covered it." The reward and the test of an author, however, is the delayed impact which his books make. There still are a few publishers who take this truth into consideration.

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Academic Peter Pans

REVILO OLIVER

Grammar, said Dante, was invented to preserve the intellectual tradition. Although such a purpose cannot have been consciously present in the mind of the first grammarian, who was probably an Egyptian priest, in the larger sense Dante was indubitably right. And in the same sense it is true that "modern linguistics" has been invented to destroy the intellectual tradition.

Grammar, on the whole, has done its work well. Every literate American or Australian reads Macaulay and Gibbon and Addison as readily as though they were his countrymen and contemporaries. Grammar, in other words, stabilizes language and inhibits the rapid changes that take place in a state of nature. It is law in language, and like all law, it substitutes the discipline of civilization for the lawless spontaneity of savagery. Had no grammar been imposed on English, we should now find Boswell as difficult as Chaucer; *Hamlet*, like *Beowulf*, would be written in an alien tongue; and the plays of Shaw would have had to be translated for presentation on Broadway.

But this fact, like all evidence of the continuity of civilization, is most distressing to minds that suffer from the cultural disease now called Liberalism. And one of the most significant manifestations of that contagious and potentially fatal malady is the vast amount of pretentious nonsense that is now being written about the English language by persons who call themselves "scientific linguists," thus appropriating to themselves the title and prestige of scholars who are seriously interested in the comparative study of languages. The latest symptom of the disease is a remarkably foolish book entitled *A Dictionary of Contemporary American Usage* and published by Random House (\$5.95) with a mighty ballyhoo that it is a "comprehensive and reliable guide" to the "effective use of the English language" because it is "based on modern linguistic scholarship."

The authors, Professor Bergen Evans and his sister, Cornelia Evans, have doubtless adapted themselves to their market with the same shrewd calculation that enables him to oper-

ate his successful television show. Their taste, we may be sure, is superior to that of the yokels whom they flatter for business reasons. Indeed, they themselves write an English which is generally correct, and they show a commendable, although apparently limited and provincial, knowledge of literature. They work very hard to imitate the urbane humor of Fowler's *Modern English Usage*, and not infrequently they succeed. But (perhaps also for business reasons) they want the plaudits of the Vandals, and they have earned them.

There is, to be sure, a good deal of sound information to be found in this book. From it you may learn, for example, that the plural of *wife* is *wives*, and that an *analyst* is not an *annalist*, although you will usually look in vain for help on more serious matters, e.g., the distinction between *autarchy* (political independence) and *autarky* (economic self-sufficiency). But the many articles that are useful or, at least, innocuous merely serve as disguise for a fundamentally subversive book.

The authors lose no opportunity to sneer at grammar or to echo the

vulgarian's contempt for dose ol' geezers what useter learn Latin an' such stuff. As is now fashionable, they howl with indignation because formal English grammar is based on Latin, evidently believing that if they say often enough that English is not Latin, they can efface the historical fact that the English language was molded to its present form by writers whose grammatical training had been exclusively Latin. This may be regrettable, just as it may be regrettable that the Spanish Armada did not conquer England, but it is a fact, and four centuries of history cannot be cancelled by a scream.

One finds in this volume such dicta as "Sentences such as . . . 'whom do you mean?' are unnatural English . . . *Who* is generally preferred." "If you are in doubt whether to use *me* or *I*, the chances are that *me* is better." The authors endorse *that is him* and similar absurdities. Their great standard, of course, is "usage," that delightful measuring stick that changes size whenever you want it to. We are told, for example, that "educated people do say *more unique*." What this means, of course, is that Professor Evans is willing to call "educated" persons whose thinking is so muddled that they can say "more unique" or "more equal." You can also claim that honest men steal, if you do not regard theft as incompatible with honesty. And if Alice objects that "'glory' doesn't mean 'a nice knockdown argument,'" a whole host of Humpty Dumpties perched on our academic walls will shout her down in unison.

It would be wrong to impute sinister motives to most of our noisy "linguists." Like moppets who have just discovered that there is no Santa Claus, they ostentatiously parade their discovery that rules of grammar are the work of the human mind, not Nature. They yearn for linguistic change, however irrational, since change in itself fascinates them, much as children are fascinated by the

violent movement of a roller coaster. They feel an adolescent's romantic longing for a primitive paradise somewhere east of Suez where nobly ignorant savages, free from the trammels of tradition, wander happily under breadfruit trees and copulate whenever the spirit moves them. And they shrink instinctively from the heavy burden of high civilization. Like all honest Socialists, they are tormented by the adolescent's dread of responsibility, and cry for a new world in which they may forever remain children, with the State replacing Mama.

Our academic Peter Pans would be quaint and amusing, if their sport were not fraught with an ominous political significance. Their knowledge of the techniques of scholarship and their bumptious claims to "science" lend a specious endorsement to the "progressive" educators who use the public schools to blight the minds of intelligent children. As the authors of that excellent pamphlet "How 'Progressive' is Your School?" put it, the immediate object of the teaching of English in such schools is "debasement of the language for the 'masses' so that it will be a less effective vehicle of independent thought and expression." The socialist dream, after all, can be realized only by the abolition of tradition and the submergence of the individual in a uniformly ignorant and brutalized rabble that will be perfectly plastic material for "social planners."

Meanwhile the pseudo-linguists will tolerate no dissent. Whenever a professor of English temerarily defends the traditional grammar, he becomes the target of pseudo-learned vituperation that resembles in its emotional violence the screeching of the character-assassins who mobbed Senator McCarthy. It is extremely significant that the most drastic term of abuse in the pseudo-linguists' vocabulary is "moralist"; this is the ultimate obloquy, reserved for vile reactionaries who believe in rules of grammar. If you claim that "it's him" is *wrong*, you are the kind of person who may even tell children that it is *wrong* to use an axe on their parents. The modern school, of course, teaches the child that "it is not at present socially acceptable" to axe one's parents so long as the old duffers do not get in the way.

Roots of German Conservatism

STEPHEN J. TONSOR

Nietzsche said, "the Germans . . . belong to the day before yesterday and the day after tomorrow—they have as yet no today." To explain why there is hope for tomorrow Edgar Alexander has written *Adenauer and the New Germany* (Farrar, \$5.25). To explain how it happens that the present does not belong to the Germans, Klemens von Klemperer has explored what he feels was the failure of Germany's neo-conservative movement (*Germany's New Conservatism*, Princeton, \$5.00).

Adenauer and the New Germany was not written for an American audience. It bears all the earmarks of a German campaign biography defending the policies of Chancellor Adenauer and the Christian Democratic Party. As a consequence the book is tendentious, less than historical in its appraisal of Adenauer and



his policies and less than understandable to the American who has no background in the day-to-day politics of postwar Germany. The author is far more interested in defending Chancellor Adenauer from the negative and silly attacks of the Social Democrats than he is in making his policies understandable to the American public.

Moreover, this study is written in the style and language of popular social-science-fiction. The misty uncertainties of the German language are admirable for such expressions, but in English where sense, economy, and clarity are the hallmarks of a good

style a sentence such as the following is hardly forgivable: "Only the sociobiographical presentation, combining the methods of ideohistorical analysis with the historicosociological interpretation, can lead to a deeper understanding of these problems."

Since the French Revolution Germany has been the pivot of world history. Today a determined Germany strengthened by the Atlantic Treaty Organization is almost the only thing standing between the Kremlin and the conquest of the Continent through economic pressure and armed force. And the strength of Germany is the strength which a heroic 81-year-old man has been able to breathe into the shattered body politic of the German nation. It is well for Americans to be reminded of these facts, and Mr. Alexander has done us a service by calling them to our attention. But the "German miracle" is not quite so simply the miracle of Adenauer. History is likely to give equal credit for the revival of German and European strength to the wise economic policies of Ludwig Erhard and the patient industry of the German people. Erhard has demonstrated not only that private enterprise and a free market economy can succeed in twentieth-century Europe, but that they are the only remedies even in a state defeated in war, racked with inflation and faced with a demoralized population and a destroyed industrial plant. There is no word of this in Mr. Alexander's essay.

Whereas Edgar Alexander's book attempts too little and thus fails to make present-day Germany understandable, Klemens von Klemperer in his, *Germany's New Conservatism*, attempts too much. In an essay of 226 pages Mr. von Klemperer attempts to give us a definition of conservatism, a case study of twentieth-century neo-conservatism, and finally an essay on three major neo-conservatives: Moeller van den Bruck, Oswald Spengler and Ernst Juenger. As if this weight were not enough to crush the delicate frame of his essay, he adds a torrid intellectual exercise by Sigmund Neumann as a foreword.

In this foreword Sigmund Neumann observes that "conservatism" is a word that has lost much of its meaning. It is, he tells us, like a coin which through much use has lost its face. He concludes, therefore, that conservatism must be reminted. Now this observation is sound. Conservatism, like all important words, must be redefined according to the usages of the day. But as a master of the mint Professor Neumann is a complete failure. It would be unfair to accuse him of counterfeiting, but his bright and shiny creation looks and sounds like a wooden nickel. Fortunately the work of Mr. von Klemperer is somewhat more worth reading than the foreword would lead us to suspect.

A Liberal might be defined as a man who knows the history of everything and the value of nothing. The dilemma of the Liberal historian is a cruel one. If history is to have meaning it must have morals, and morals can only come from the past. But the Liberal has already rejected the past for the present, or as in our heroic age, for some future utopia. The Liberal cannot tell whether or not he is lost or just where the wrong turn was taken. This is precisely Mr. von Klemperer's difficulty.

Not even Liberals will debate with you the fact that the Nazi movement was the devil's own work, although many of them are not so certain about its sibling, socialism. Nor can it be denied that the so-called "neo-conservatives" paved the way for the advent of National Socialism. How does it happen, asks the Liberal, that good men can be so wrong-headed? Does not this experience imply that all conservatives are potential national socialists?

It is at this point that the Liberal inability to discern values becomes important. The men whom Klemens von Klemperer describes as neo-conservatives were never at any time conservatives. They were all, without exception, revolutionary nihilists bent on the total destruction of Christian Europe. Mr. von Klemperer reveals this misunderstanding of conservatism in his confused discussion of Nietzsche.

Germany did not "go wrong," as the author implies, in the final years of the Weimar Republic. She went wrong in 1870 and the years immediately previous to the foundation of

the Bismarckian Reich, when liberals in Germany and throughout Western Europe congratulated themselves that Bismarckian "Tory-democracy" had triumphed over the German Imperial idea and the Roman Church. These two, Europe and the universalism of the Catholic Church, the *res publica christiana*, were the founts of true German conservatism. They were in 1870 and are today the only valid and

workable political ideas in the West. They were done to death by the Prussian nationalism and the *Kulturkampf* of 1870. Spengler, Moeller van den Bruck and Juenger were all true sons of the Bismarckian Reich. They are not the sons of Christian Europe. No historian with values could judge otherwise. But then, Liberals are always mistaken about the facts of human nature.

The Necessity of Invention

HUGH KENNER

Pound, Yeats, Joyce, and now William Carlos Williams: it is because there has been no twentieth-century Rome or Venice that so much of our literary history has been contained in the published correspondence of the eminent writers. The colleagues, disciples and inquirers who would have flocked to a capital if there had been one, have instead used the post. The masters, on the other hand, have put into letters much that would otherwise have been delivered *viva voce* and so lost. If Johnson had only had reason to write out what Drummond so cryptically reported! "He said that Donne, for not keeping accent, deserved hanging"; and no doubt he said much more, all occluded forever by that idiot clamshell of a note. It is not too much to say that the circulation of an ample statement by Johnson on Donne's prosody might, by provoking curiosity, have saved English poetry several runs of barren decades.

We think of discipleship and reaction with too Cartesian a simplicity; three intelligent sentences may determine the climate in which the

principal subject of an age's speculations gets thought about, or the incidence and variety of the interests that are allowed to gather around it. The nature of the interest Donne's poems have attracted in our time, among poets as among scholars, has been largely created by a hundred words of Eliot's.

So much can pregnant *obiter dicta* accomplish; and Dr. Williams in the same way may prove to have caused, by making his letters available, an orientation of interest in certain fundamental poetic components—lines, rhythms and feet—which his poems could only imply and not compel. For the novelty of his *Selected Letters* (McDowell, Obolensky, \$5.00) consists in the remarks, scattered through the latter third of the book, concerning the necessity for metrical invention, and the nature of that necessity.

Dr. Williams presents it as an urgent civic need. That the arts feed civilizations, and not only triumphant arts or ideal civilizations, is a truth never half grasped. By corollary, that a genuine technical innovation in an art—not a "new style," which may as well be by Dior, but an invention in the procedures of poetry or painting as definable as the Yale lock—that such an act may transmute the vital tissue of several generations is a truth concealed from people who have known since school-days that Arkwright transformed England by inventing the spinning-jenny. The mutations of the steam age and the electronic age are commonplace; it is equally pertinent to understand that Anglo-Saxonry is just emerging

In Coming Issues

Whittaker Chambers on Ayn Rand's *Atlas Shrugged*

Father R.-L. Bruckberger on Raymond Aron's *The Opium of the Intellectuals*

Ernest Van Den Haag on Gilbert Seldes' *The Seven Lively Arts*

from an iambic pentameter civilization.

"If the measurement itself is confined," Dr. Williams writes, "every dimension of the verse and all implications touching it suffer confinement and generate pressures within our lives which will blow it and us apart. It is no matter that we are dealing with a comparatively unnoticed part of the field of our experience, the field of poetics, the result to our minds will be drastic. You cannot break through old customs in verse or social organization, without drastically changing the whole concept and also the structure of our lives."

There is "no escape from the necessity of invention"; evading that necessity, the elder statesmen of letters "know a lot, granted, and they are sensitive, granted, and skillful, granted. Well, one might ask, what more do you want? I'd answer: they seem lethargic. An old story." And what needs inventing is simply a new measure, a new mode of apprehension settled in among the words.

"I believe that all the old academic values hold today as always . . . But the terms in which we must parallel the past are entirely new and peculiar to ourselves." Not a man of 67 growing tolerant through lethargy, but an inverse Columbus discovering that his New World is India approached from the west. He continues:

"The poem to me . . . is an attempt, an experiment, a failing experiment, toward assertion with broken means but an assertion, always, of a new and total culture, the lifting of an environment to expression. Thus it is social, the poem is a social instrument—accepted or not accepted seems to be of no importance. It embraces everything we are." It is "the assertion that we are alive as ourselves—as much of the environment as it can grasp: exactly as Hellas lived in the *Iliad*."

Hence the focus of invention on form. Whitman "started us on the source of our researches into the line by breaking finally with English prosody. After him there has been for us no line. There will be none until we invent it. Almost everything I do is of no more interest to me than the technical addition it makes toward the discovery of a workable metric in a new mode."

Noteworthy Decision

Outlawing the Communist Party: A Case History is the decision of the German High Court illegalizing the Communist Party in West Germany, edited and translated by Wolfgang P. von Schmertzling and published by The Bookmailer (\$5.00).

This German decision invites comparison with the decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States. By paltry and pathetic word-juggling that Court picked a groping way from the Dennis case to the bizarre decisions of last June. Like Sputnik, these were somewhat out of touch with terrestrial realities; but they were sufficiently loaded with Liberal clichés and commonplaces to quadruple with the regnant conformisms respecting civil liberties. The several Justices have created a kind of decisional harem, strident with jealous clashes of incompatible and pre-

cious ideas and fractured facts.

The decision of the First Senate of the Federal Constitutional Court of West Germany is a triumph of simple, incisive analysis, thorough understanding, logical order and principled argument.

The difference between the German and the American adjudications respecting the Communist conspiracy is as marked as the difference between sight and blindness, comprehension and incomprehension, reason and jarring solecism. The German Court had a lawful objective (to curb the conspiracy) and found a lawful means to achieve it. The American Court had and has the same objective; but it subverts its avowed end by a futile dialectic which finds all practical means of fighting Communists worthy of condemnation.

GODFREY P. SCHMIDT

The fundamental fact about English poetry is that its last autochthonous invention took place in the 1590's, at the service of declamation, in a theater whose postulate was that the minds of the audience had to be borne, by every possible device of insistent suggestion, away from the makeshift visible. "This," before their eyes, was not "the face that launched a thousand ships," it was the face of a pantomime boy. Hence a swing away from the actual which carried poetry through decades of intramural allusion, superimposed imagery, and gorgeous dream-countries "where the ivory ibis starlike skim," before its velocity was expended in the last thrust of Swinburne, leaving a spent decorousness to be revitalized from England and America.

The fundamental fact about American poetry, correspondingly, is simply that its history does not reach back to the Elizabethans. The very canons of the language were imported from an England undergoing the eighteenth-century phase of anti-Elizabethan middle style. A Williams didn't need to wrestle with the Shakespearean incubus, only with its

reputation. Even that wrestle wasted him prodigious energies. "We have been looking," he wrote in 1951, "for too big, too spectacular a divergence from the old. The 'new measure' is much more particular, much more related to the remote past than I, for one, believed. It was a natural blunder. . . ."

Writing off the attempt to demolish mountains, he seeks, like Cezanne, to rephrase them. The *Letters* make clear, as the retrospective *Autobiography* does not, the nature and import of his career, as fecund and definitive as that of Yeats, though less symmetrical. And chance passages from the letters of the last fifteen years may well help save the meaning of his poetic achievement from misinterpretation, and help focus in a valid direction the energies of future writers. "It may be that as a poet I have not had the genius to do the things I set up as essential if our verse is to blossom. I know, however, the innovation I predict must come to be. Some one, some infant now, will have to find the way we miss. Meanwhile I shall go on talking."

The Curiosity of John Aubrey

JOHN ABBOT CLARK

John Aubrey, the seventeenth-century English antiquary and author of the inimitable *Brief Lives*, has at long last come into his own. Few writers, if any, have ever surpassed him in the art of investing the inconsequential detail, the infra-pedestrian fact, with a queer kind of charm, amounting almost to magic—a charm that eludes analysis and defies description.

Although he might, with Hazlitt, have said at the end, "I have had a happy life," frustration and failure continually dogged him. His studies at Oxford were interrupted by the Civil War. He was at the Middle Temple, but was never called to the bar. After losing his estates, he wandered from one country house to the next. He was always losing, it seems—"love and Lawe suites," as well as everything else. That shabby ingrate, Anthony Wood, whom Aubrey served as sort of a glorified legman for many years, prophesied that Aubrey would "one day break his neck while running downstairs after a retreating guest, in the hope of extracting a story from him," and described him as "a shiftless person, roving and magotie-

headed, and sometimes little better than crased."

Aubrey didn't, and he wasn't. And now the University of Michigan Press, in bringing out the Oliver Lawson Dick edition of Aubrey's *Brief Lives*, has placed all American readers who are still capable of distinguishing a book from a handsaw very much in its debt. I can think of none to appear in recent years which is more likely to hold college students from play, and their parents from the color (TV)-corner, than this handsome, reasonably priced (\$5.95) volume.

Interest in Aubrey has been slowly growing for some time. It was probably John Collier's *The Scandal and Credulities of John Aubrey*, published in 1931, which first acquainted contemporary readers with the riches to be found in the *Lives*. And, as attractive and engrossing, as intelligently edited and revealingly introduced as it is, the Oliver Lawson Dick edition by no means renders superfluous the admirable, if somewhat bowdlerized, monumental "transcript" edition of the Reverend Andrew Clark in 1898. Nor should Anthony Powell's engagingly informative *John Aubrey and His Friends* of several years ago be overlooked. Nor Lytton Strachey's delightful sketch of Aubrey in *Portraits in Miniature*.

But to get back to the Dick edition (one of the easiest, most pleasant, and most rewarding things one can do in these days of our satellidiocy). Upon being told that although Aubrey wrote (and the word "wrote" has seldom been used as loosely as it is here) 426 *Lives*, only 134 of them have been selected by Mr. Dick, the reader may quite naturally feel that he is being cheated. But, as the editor is quick to point out, the *Lives* "vary so considerably in length (one consists of two words, another of 23,000) that many of them are of no interest whatsoever, consisting either of extracts from books or of mere lists of dates and facts."

And Mr. Dick is right. Even so, some readers, especially those who have dipped from time to time into A. Clark's *omnium gatherum*, may

mildly regret that Aubrey's latest editor has seen fit to discard all of the *Lives* that have "nothing of intrinsic value to offer." In Aubrey, the line between the intrinsic and the extrinsic is devilishly hard to draw. The inclusion of two or three of the extrinsic ones would have done no great harm.

All readers should applaud Mr. Dick's decision to leave most of Aubrey's howlers uncorrected and his dewy-fresh spelling undefiled. Regarding the "vexed question of obscenity," the editor reminds us that in the seventeenth century, "sex had not yet been singled out as the sin par excellence; it was merely one among many failings, and Aubrey no more thought of concealing it than he dreamed of avoiding the mention of gluttony or drunkenness."

So, after quite sensibly judging Aubrey's work "by its general tendency and not by particular details," he decided "not to bowdlerize it in the slightest degree, but to print it as it was written, without emphasis and without concealment."

At the outset of his introductory account of Aubrey and his times—an account which constitutes a pretty sizable biography in itself—Mr. Dick maintains that Aubrey's long neglect is not just partly but entirely his own fault. "Aubrey's love of life," says Mr. Dick, "was so intense, his curiosity so promiscuous and so insatiable, that he proved quite incapable of completing any work he undertook. Each one was started in a most businesslike and practical fashion, but before long the original plan was always buried beneath the flood of digressions and notes, of horoscopes, letters and stories, which his restless mind seemed powerless to control."

From that veritable jungle of manuscript material which Aubrey (and A. Clark) left behind them, Mr. Dick has, with great skill, understanding and fidelity, built up this edition of the *Lives* "like a jigsaw, until the disconnected pieces have at last resolved themselves into a complete picture." Although even now there is still no memorial to Aubrey at Oxford, it doesn't matter too much, really. For what finer memorial could he have than this Oliver Lawson Dick edition of *Brief Lives*?

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Green China Hand in Red China

RODNEY GILBERT

It is a well-established tradition that the Chinese take a lot of knowing. Those Occidentals who go to China to stay for some little time, who study the language assiduously, read all they can find about Chinese history, philosophy, religion and folklore, and make all the friendly contacts they can, are much surer at the end of three months that they know what a Chinese will think than they are at the end of three years. Then, the man who has traveled widely in the country and has been an eyewitness to dramatic developments over twenty or twenty-five years, has a genuine horror of being described in public or private as an "authority" or "expert" on China. This is, as I have said, tradition. But it is a tradition that never has and never will deter visitors to old China or the Red China of the hour from rushing away to write a book. And they are never content to limit themselves to their own observations and impressions (which might be of some value); they feel bound to interpret them and to indulge in prophecy.

A little over two years ago a seasoned French journalist, M. Robert Guillain, got permission to visit Red China and did so. He spent something more than two months there. A year later he turned out a book about it in French, and in an English translation (presumably in Great Britain), which now appears in this country as *600 Million Chinese* (Criterion, \$5.00). Like most Frenchmen, M. Guillain not only pursues factual information with great zeal and reports honestly, but also observes many small but illuminating details by the wayside and so leavens and spices a travelogue as few Anglo-Saxons can. Until he gets philosophical toward the end—even to the point where he thinks that Red China has inspired in him a vision of a socialized world full of love and fraternity—this is a very readable book. But because he succumbs to the short-term visitor's urge to interpret and prophesy, and even to prescribe policy toward Red China, it is also a dangerous one.

M. Guillain moved from Hongkong

to Canton and thence to Peiping by train. With his ever-present official interpreters, he flew to Harbin in Northern Manchuria and returned by rail, through Changchun (the Japanese capital of Manchukuo) and Mukden, seeing all the wonders of Russian-equipped heavy industrial plants and renovated Japanese mines and the one collective farm to which some dozens of European journalists and thousands of Asiatics have been introduced.

From Peiping he flew to Lanchow, in Kansu, where he learned more than anywhere else about slave labor on the rail extensions from that city, but nothing that he records about the great belligerent Moslem population nearby or about the grassland Tibetans just beyond them. He returned by rail eastward to Sian (now, as anciently, Ch'ang-an), whence he flew to Chungking on the Yangtze. That great stream he followed down through the gorges and thence through central China to Shanghai, where he found a thoroughly recalcitrant community which the Reds hate and are trying to destroy. Thence he returned to Canton and to Hongkong.

M. Guillain assumes the right to make contrasts. He was in Shanghai in 1937 when the Japanese were blasting their way into possession of all the Chinese communities around the foreign concessions. He was there again in 1946—the carpetbagging era after Japan's defeat. He was in Peiping and then in Shanghai during the collapse of the Nationalist resistance and had a few months under the Reds in Shanghai. These relatively brief experiences on China's outer fringe during periods of great tension and of much disruption of all normal life give him the authority, he thinks, to find the peace of spiritual death under the Reds a great improvement by contrast. But his horror of the means used to bring about this physically feverish but spiritually stagnant condition of a great mass of humanity, is set forth with great warmth in the heart of this book. From Chapter 7 through Chapter 17,

the reader will find the most devastating of excoriations of Communist regimentation in China.

But then, as though he were in total ignorance of the horrors exposed in the body of the book and of his own horror of those horrors, this strange author writes a foreword in which he strongly advocates general recognition of the Red Chinese regime, Red China's admission to the United Nations, and the restoration of free trade relations with her. He even says at one point, after submitting a huge body of evidence to show how community espionage, the denunciation of friend by friend and of parents by children has shattered China's moral system, that the Reds have succeeded in mobilizing China's congenital good will and of turning it into a genuine concern for community welfare.

In short, this reads like a book by a dual personality—sometimes wonderfully shrewd and honest, sometimes under a spell put upon him by a Taoist necromancer who had been converted to dialectical materialism.



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Much Ado About Very Little

PRISCILLA L. BUCKLEY

To start with, there's this middle-aged Parisian couple, Alain and Fanny Maligrasse, who hold Monday evening soirées. Alain has fallen in love with one of the guests, a young actress, and when it becomes clear he will never advance beyond the hand-holding stage, he turns to drink and prostitutes. Alain's country nephew ("there is something extraordinarily kind in his face") makes the grade with the actress, but only temporarily. He is bumped in favor of a producer who can offer her a juicy role in a new play.

The heartbroken nephew, turning for comfort to the heartbroken aunt, absent-mindedly jumps into her bed one night; decides this is not for him and goes for consolation of another kind (platonic) to Josée, rich, attractive, promiscuous and, at the moment, mistress of a taciturn medical student. Josée, in turn, is worshipped by one Bernard (a business colleague of Maligrasse and a former lover of the actress) who, bored by his cow-like wife, has taken off to Poitiers ("of all the cities in France, the deadest") to write a novel. Josée finds out that Bernard's wife is pregnant and may die in childbirth and decides it is her duty to alert Bernard to his wife's condition. Bernard, however, thinks she has come to Poitiers in response to his passionate love letter so, rather than hurt his feelings, Josée spends three days (and nights) with him before releasing her communiqué. It is only later, in Paris, on a rain-soaked bench in the Place de la Concorde that Bernard realizes that the Poitiers idyll meant nothing. Nothing.

"The soggy cigarette that Bernard tried vainly to light was a symbol of all they had in common, for they could never be really happy and they knew it. At the same time they knew, obscurely, that it didn't matter. It simply didn't matter."

For those who have not yet guessed it, this is the plot (simplified) of Françoise Sagan's much-heralded third novel, *Those Without Shadows* (Dutton, \$2.95). Reading it, one has the feeling that the *only* thing that mattered to Miss Sagan in writing

it was how much money it would bring in. And in this expectation, she will not be disappointed. *Those Without Shadows* (titled *Dans un An, Dans un Mois*) had the largest first printing of any book in French history (200,000 copies).

And yet it cannot compare with *Bonjour Tristesse* or even *A Certain Smile* in structure, craftsmanship or style. It is a series of vignettes, not a novel, with four major love affairs and several minor ones brushed off in 125 short pages. But more important, there is no warmth in it, none of the perception and introspection which were so remarkable in Miss Sagan's earlier works. The *avant garde* intellectual in *Those Without Shadows* has been poured from a

stylized mold. He is an uninteresting beast, shallow, vain, self-centered, unable to discern the difference between immediate carnal gratification and *la grande passion*. So lightweight himself, the new Sagan boulevardier evokes no response in the reader.

At 21, Miss Sagan's sophistication has worn too thin. The economy of words for which she was justly praised, has turned into parsimony. She has found a new "ready-mix" for success, heavy on spices and short on basic ingredients.

Everything is too pat. Her novel, for instance, like a bad play ends: (Time) one year later. (Scene) The Maligrasse apartment. (Characters) The same. The meaning of it all is conveyed in these final words:

Bernard: It can't be like this. What have we done, all of us? What has happened? What does it all mean?

Josée: (Tenderly) Don't think about it. If you do you'll go mad.

Poet, Prophet or Scourge?

ROBERT PHELPS

Born a Catholic, in 1873, Charles Péguy grew up in Orléans, with the image of Joan of Arc deep in his soul. At twenty he had abandoned his faith and become a dreyfusard, a socialist, a "free-thinker." He married, founded a magazine, and for the next ten years scourged everyone, left and right, with his integrity and zeal. Then, in 1908, he announced—not his return to the Church, for he insisted he had never really left it—but his realization of its true vision. After years of polemical prose, he began to write poetry. "*C'est un renaissance catholique qui se fait par moi*," he declared, but since his naive temperament seemed incompatible with the sophisticated anguish associated with religious revival among the intellectuals, his highbrow friends were only embarrassed and baffled. When he died in the battle of the Marne, he was promptly sentimentalized as a socialist saint who had given his life for *la patrie*, but even today, as Alexander Dru's study *Péguy* (Harper, \$2.50) admits, his position in France, whether as poet, prophet, or scourge, remains ambiguous.

Actually, it is very simple. Like

Joan of Arc, Péguy was naive only in the sense that he could see with absolute singleness. He rejected socialism for the same reason that he had earlier rejected Catholicism: it seemed to him, by 1900, to have become all means, method, outer protocol and expedience—what Péguy called *la politique*, and to have lost its heart, pulse, innocence and vision—what he called *la mystique*.

Against all the world's instruments, of government or art or belief, he brought the same indictment: too many branches, too few roots. The Christian vision had begun in single hearts, and over the centuries had worked outward into mere systems, orders, forms, strategies which by the nineteenth century had nearly become ends in themselves. After fighting the Reformation and the Enlightenment, the Church was as worldly and political-minded as its enemies. It had lost the innocence the apostles had begun with. Like Kierkegaard, Newman, and Bloy, Péguy was one of the resurgent white blood-cells its bloodstream produced to fight its own infection.

He saw all human action in two basic images: Clio, who was history, full of fuss, fury, and big talk, always organizing, building, arranging, con-ning; and Veronica, "a little nobody, a child, who takes out her handkerchief and takes an eternal imprint of the face of Jesus"—i.e., any individual soul who by grace or purity of heart simply sees what the saints saw, the great but not ponderously intricate truth of Christianity, and acts directly, immediately, spontaneously. Péguy's favorite word was *approfondissement*—deepening—the form of growth which he opposed to the mere elaborating and complicating which takes up most of mankind's time.

Of course, it follows that the poetic art of such a visionary, as revealed in *The Mystery of the Holy Innocents* (translated by M. P. F. Pakenham, Harper, \$3.00), will be rough and unselfconscious. It will despise the compromise that most poetry makes. For unlike a pure visionary, a poet wants to make something, and any form of incarnation always involves a reduction, a stiffening, of the original idea. It settles for the bird in the hand, instead of the dozen in the bush.

Exalted and annunciatory, Péguy's verse is almost entirely indifferent to verbal *politique*. Beside most poets, he is like a mendicant pilgrim whose passing through a village makes the parish priest seem excessively organized and worldly. He is more like Blake, in his later poems, than Hopkins, or Herbert, or anyone else whose poetry has a religious vision. Hence he is neither greater nor less, but different in kind, and will probably be read with greatest satisfaction by those who have already joined the renaissance he predicted, and who will hear his words as they would a liturgy: not for discovery, so much as for confirmation.

Editions of a Poet

First, he's rejected.
Then published, selected,
Collected;
Neglected . . .
Resurrected,
Dissected;
Respected.

JOHN FANDEL

An Important Book On The Middle East*

At a time when there is such a bewildering volume of news on the Middle East, there remains the duty of American news media to keep their readers informed by printing all they can get about both sides of this controversy. The skill of the leaders of Israel in getting their side before the American public contrasts with the bumbling and fumbling way the Arabs present their side.

In these circumstances the book, "There Goes the Middle East" (Devine-Adair), by Alfred M. Lilienthal, comes in handy in making one of the best presentations that has been published of the Arab side of this historic clash. Mr. Lilienthal is a Jew who belongs to the American Council of Judaism, whose members repudiate the political movement of Zionism, and insist that their religion does not call for support of such a political movement.

He has been to the Middle East several times. He knows the leaders on both sides. He now accepts the existence of Israel as a fact, although he condemns severely the methods that the Israel leaders have used. Yet he constantly seeks to promote a settlement between the Arab states and Israel. He fears and explains how the present unresolved deadlock is rapidly driving the Arab states into the arms of the Soviet Union.

In a recently issued supplement to his book, he outlines a suggested Middle East peace proposal, which calls for concessions by both sides.

Israel would be asked: (1) to surrender Western Galilee and a portion of the Tulkarm triangle to permit 150,000 Arab refugees to resettle there; (2) to internationalize the Holy City of Jerusalem; (3) to grant permission to allow 100,000 Arab refugees to live within her borders, while other Arabs would be compensated for their property losses, just as the Jews of Germany were; and (4) to de-Zionize—that is, cease attempting to be a world headquarters and spokesman for Jewry, and end the practice of recruiting Jews for Israel from all over the world.

The Arab concessions would be: (1) Recognition of Israel; (2) lifting of the Arab trade boycott; (3) granting of free access for Israel to the Suez Canal; and (4) granting of free access for Israel to the Gulf of Aqaba.

At the present moment the Israel leaders would defiantly refuse to make the concessions suggested above, and with equal scorn and defiance the Arab leaders would refuse to make concessions they are asked to make. Whenever such irreconcilability develops, wars inevitably result.

The danger became apparent a year ago at Suez, when Israel, along with France and Britain, attacked Egypt. American intervention compelled a restoration of the frontiers before that attack.

But the situation continues to ferment. Arabs now look to the Soviet Union for arms, just as the Israelis looked to Communist Czechoslovakia for arms in 1948. There the situation stands today, with Syria being accused of going Communist, because she accepted arms from Moscow. That is a gross misrepresentation.

The value of the Lilienthal book lies in the fact that he explains in some detail how the Arabs of old Palestine have suffered one of the cruelest conquests in history, and that it has aroused the united hatred of the Arab world to a point where it is willing to do what Churchill did in 1941 after the Nazi attack on the Soviet Union, make an alliance with the Devil.

Americans should inform themselves on why they are, within the next 10 to 15 years, going to fight a war in the Middle East, amidst a population hostile to them, which will probably become a world war with all of its nuclear devastation.

That in the midst of this situation Mr. Lilienthal seeks to promote peace by getting concessions from both sides should at least command the respect of all Americans who want to know why they are destined to be called upon to make a sacrifice that will make past world wars look trifling.

*From an editorial in the (Tucson) Arizona Daily Star, Oct. 24, 1957

Note: If your bookstore doesn't carry this book, the publisher will be glad to supply it at a price of \$4.00 per copy. Write THE DEVINE-ADAIR CO., 23 E. 26 St., New York 10, N.Y.

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To the Editor

America's Illiterates

I cannot let American Education Week close without thanking Abe Kalish for "Psychology or Poor Teaching?" [November 16].

... In my fifth year class in the public school I have twelve children who have just begun to read. I use second year books for this group and many cannot read them. These children all have good eyesight and good hearing; all but two have normal intelligence.

What am I to do with these pupils who have not learned one year's work in four years? I must psychoanalyze them and their parents, solve all their home problems and then teach them four years' work in the next ten months, since most of them will go into the sixth grade next September regardless. ... No help is given to me or to them, except for three pupils who get an occasional hour of "remedial reading" from first year teachers, the same ones who did not teach them to read four years ago.

These are not exceptional conditions.

Hicksville, N.Y.

M. KIMM

Republican Defection

Much has been written about Governor Meyner's re-election by a thumping 200,000 margin in conventionally Republican New Jersey. What we haven't seen sufficiently emphasized, however, is that it took a great number of defecting Republicans—maybe as many as 200,000—to give the Democratic Governor his victory. All such were, of course, conservatives; for converts to "Modern Republicanism" had abundant assurances from the President, Vice President Nixon, Clifford Case, Bernard Shanley *et al.* that Malcolm Forbes was of that persuasion, and so had no reason to defect.

As a check on this assumption, note what happened in Forbes' own strongly Republican county—Somerset. Meyner got 24,082 votes; Forbes 20,840. In contrast to this all Republican candidates for county and local offices won by comfortable margins. The most conspicuous of these vic-

tories, indeed, was that of the incumbent Freeholder (Adams), generally known as an arch-conservative and allegedly at odds with Forbes, over his Democratic rival (Gabler). The vote was 22,705 to 19,151. So it happened that Conservative Republican Adams' margin of victory (3,235) in Somerset was nearly the same as Democratic Meyner's margin (3,554) over "Modern Republican" Forbes. There can be no mistaking the significance of this. Somerset's conservative Republicans love not Democracy more, but love soft-boiled Republicanism less—and less and less by the hour.

Bernardsville, N.J.

HEPTISAX

Sociology: No Science

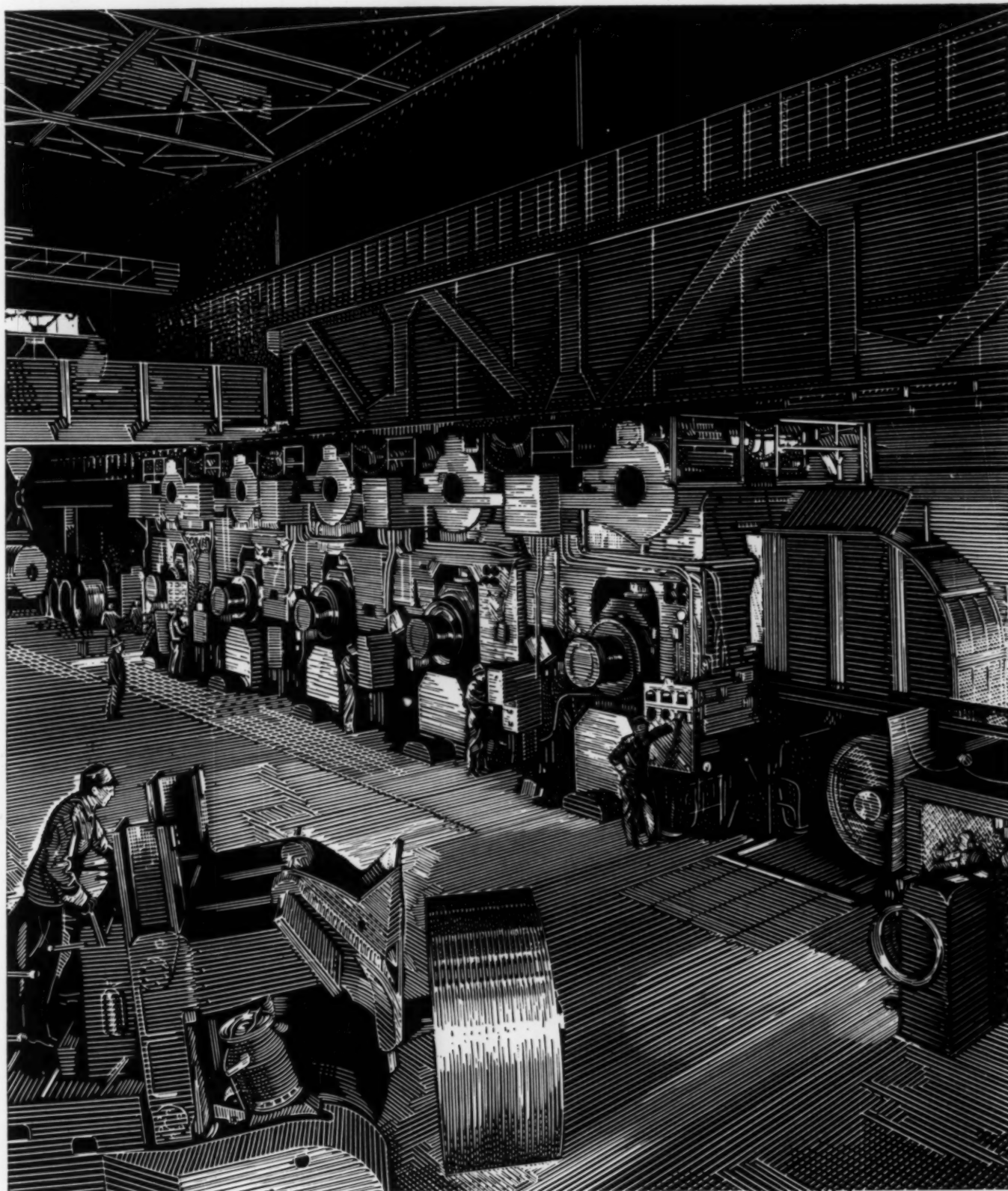
I find fault with your occasional use of the words "social science" as apparently synonymous with "sociology."

Sociology is *not* a science unless one totally perverts the meaning of the word "science." It is usually a rationalization of emotional complexes; and most of those who, other than thoughtlessly, call it a science are either ignorami, or charlatans who use the word "science" for the sake of personal prestige, and to give false authority to their dicta.

This is not to argue that sociology cannot be approached intelligently. It is not to argue that certain hypotheses cannot be shown as tenable, others as untenable. ... However, while common sense and experience may make these deductions acceptable for practical purposes, the means for the controlled experimentation required, say, for a study of heredity in hamsters to be considered scientific are lacking, both because of the multiplicity of factors involved, and because sufficient control over a sufficient number of subjects for a sufficiently long time is impossible except for very limited purposes.

It is wisdom, not science or cleverness, which must sustain sociology.

DR. FRANCIS FIELDING-REID
Baltimore, Md.



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